

Evaluation of the use of one hand wipe by patients at meal times

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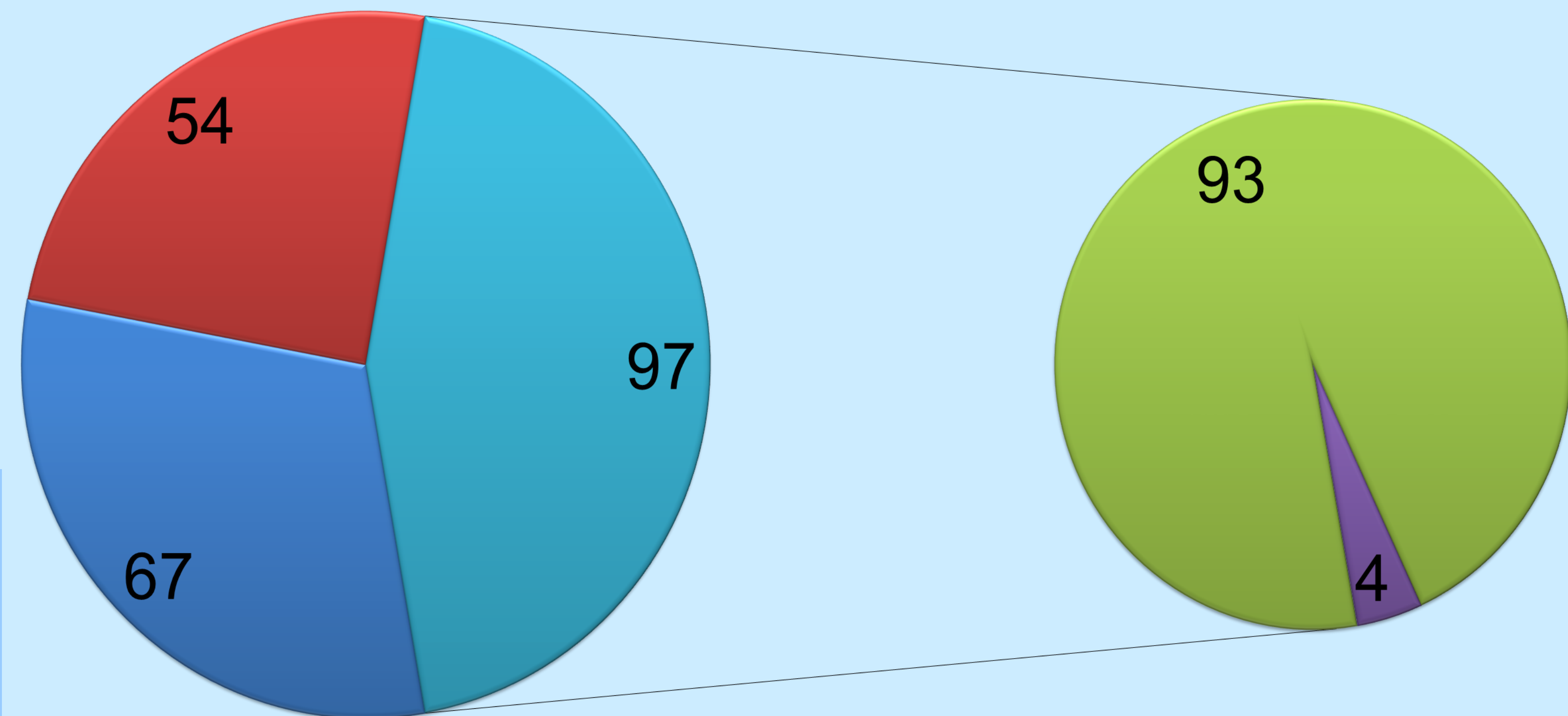
Introduction

- Healthcare-associated infections negatively impact patients and carry a significant financial burden for service providers, costing the NHS at least £1bn annually (1).
- Research has focused on hand hygiene in staff, but patient hand hygiene is an important emerging theme.
- **This study aimed to evaluate the appropriate use of a single hand wipe by patients at meal times.**
- Outcomes included:
 - To observe the use of hand wipes at patient mealtimes.
 - To assess the efficacy/ appropriateness of their current use.
 - To identify barriers to their effective use.
 - To create an objective data set to guide future studies and inform practice.

Methods

- Observational study of all inpatient wards at Charing Cross Hospital in London at lunch meal time
- Each ward was audited once only and on a randomly chosen day in a space of 10
- Evaluation sheet consisting:
 - 9 specific observations of how the wipes are being used and presented
 - 1 question asking patient if they understood what the wipes are for.
- Assessment sheet to be completed on site, in real time by IPC nurse.

Did the patient have understanding of the hand wipes usage?



- Patients who were unable to participate
- Patients stated they didn't understand the use of hand wipes
- Patients stated they did understand the use of hand wipes
- Patients stated they did understand the use of hand wipes and used it correctly



Results

- 17 in-patient wards were piloted
- 4 wards did not give any hand wipes to patients
- 69 out of the 218 patients observed were not given any wipes
- 4 patients of those observed used the wipes correctly
- 800 wipes = £28.50 1 wipe = £0.04 (4p)
- 1700 patients 3 meals per day = 5100 meals in total
- 5100 x £0.04 = £204 per day
- £204 x 365 = **£74,460** a year

Discussion

- The use of hand wipes could be a key factor in reducing transmission of infections at mealtimes
- Nevertheless,
 - ❖ Patients need to know they are there
 - ❖ How to use them
 - ❖ When to use them
 - ❖ To be able to use them
- It is essential that **all** staff involved in giving out meals facilitate the patient in the use of the wipes.

References

1. Mantle 2015. Reducing HCAI what the commissioner needs to know. NHS England